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2Q '03 edition 3 of 3  
**"The Merchant Speaks"**  
features and functionality

[the e-tailing group inc.](#)

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## trends

### ONLINE MERCHANTS NAME MOST DESIRED MERCHANDISING FEATURES AND TECHNOLOGY PRIORITIES

E-commerce features and functionality that drive bottom line results are top merchant priorities based on feedback from over 200 senior executives who completed *the e-tailing group's* 1Q 2003 research questionnaire, "**The Merchant Speaks**."

This 2nd annual proprietary survey of merchants confirmed that they are investing in tools to help customers efficiently find what they want, enable smart browsing, timely and targeted communication and simplified ordering.

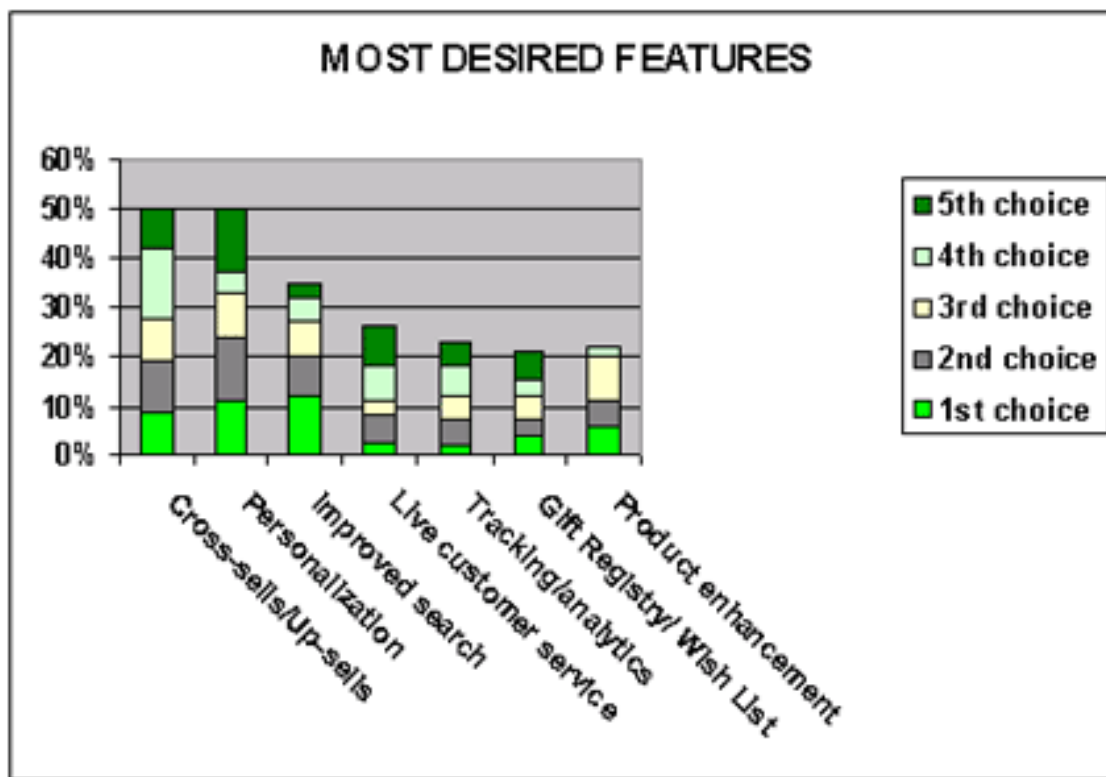
Unfortunately many of the sites that are in need of **platform upgrades** or **new servers** launched with platforms that did not survive the recent "technology demise".

Others are kludged together with a mix of proprietary legacy systems and off-the-shelf software solutions. Either way - these sites are forced to **invest in improving their backbone** before they can even consider other initiatives.

Essential Customer Service and Site Performance initiatives should be the next to be funded, followed by less critical yet "nice-to-have" Merchandising and Personalization tools.

#### Key Findings:

**Respondents were asked: "What 5 features, in order of importance, would you most like to add to you site, assuming resources were not an issue?"**



- Among the numerous responses, listed are the top seven, of which **Cross-sells/Up-sells**, **Personalization** and **Improved Search** were mentioned most often overall. Unfortunately inadequate resources have often kept these core features from becoming reality for many merchants.
- Reflecting the various states of site evolution, **Cross-sells/Up-sells** and **Personalization** were mentioned equally as frequently as 1st choice as they were selected the 5th most desired feature.
- **Improved Search** was most often mentioned as 1st choice and we concur as both browsers and directed shoppers rely on this tool to find products or information

An open ended question asked respondents to list their top 3 technology initiatives for 2003. In order of frequency mentioned, answers for #1 ranged from:

**PLATFORM** - from new servers to upgrades

**ORDER PROCESSING** - order management, history, invoicing, confirmations

**PERFORMANCE** - site look & feel, page redesign, no frames, user friendly, real time

**PERSONALIZATION** - enhanced segmentation to programming

**SEARCH** - enhanced to advanced

**PRODUCT ENHANCEMENT** - image speed, zoom, 3D

**AUTOMATION** - dynamic publishing, custom promo engine, code enhancements

**CHANNEL INTEGRATION** - review multi-channel tech needs; interactivity to the store

**MARKETING** - email broadcast tests

**MEASUREMENT** - site analytics

## who we are

*the e-tailing group, inc.* is a Chicago based consultancy that provides strategic and e-commerce merchandising solutions to merchants selling online as well as to firms targeting that market.

### **CONSIDER A CUSTOMIZED E-AUDIT OF YOUR SITE**

See how you stack-up against your competition, your category and the e-tailing group top 100 sites.

Whether your site was recently launched or is established, learn where to prioritize future upgrades and how to enhance performance.

[CONTACT US](#) ABOUT YOUR E-AUDIT

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